

Inspection of Ludlow Church of England School

Bromfield Road, Burway, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1GJ

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

In this school, there is a strong moral purpose to give pupils a springboard to future success. This and the school's Christian values are the driving forces behind what the school provides and how it goes about providing it. Pupils experience a broad, rich education that goes beyond the academic. It expands pupils' horizons. It helps prepare them for future education, life in British society and the world of work.

Ludlow School is a calm, orderly and harmonious place in which to learn. Pupils follow the clear rules and routines that all staff expect. Poor behaviour is not tolerated. Staff quickly deal with any that happens to minimise the chance of a pupil's behaviour disrupting the learning of others.

Pupils' polite behaviour reflects the school's respectful culture. Pupils interact courteously with staff. They behave well towards one another. Not much bullying occurs. When it does, staff take it seriously and tackle it effectively.

Staff have pupils' best interests at heart. This motive permeates all decision-making. Consequently, pupils are safe and well cared for. Leaders strive to provide the high-quality education they believe pupils deserve. The quality of education which pupils receive has improved in recent years and keeps on getting better.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Outcomes are improving rapidly. More pupils now study a broad range of subjects for GCSE, including a language. Examination results are rising from having been too low in recent years. This is thanks to an improved curriculum and its delivery. Better results reflect the broad knowledge and deep understanding pupils are developing in the subjects they study.

Leaders have carefully considered the range of subjects available for pupils to study. The curriculum now gives pupils a wide range of knowledge in Years 7 to 9, before they opt for GCSE courses. Subject leaders are planning the detailed content of each subject. This process is complete in some subjects. In others, it is a work in progress.

The team of subject leaders is building a coherent curriculum pathway. This sets out where pupils will learn something in one subject and use it for future learning in another. For example, pupils will learn about the cardiovascular system in science before needing to use the knowledge in physical education.

Leaders take deliberate steps to ensure that the curriculum benefits all pupils equally. Disadvantaged pupils experience the same quality of education as other pupils. Teachers adapt lessons as needed for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders make sure that teachers do this without lowering expectations for these pupils.

On the whole, subject plans contain plenty of detail about what pupils must learn and when they will learn it. Sophisticated thinking about how pupils learn these subjects underpins the plans. This helps teachers to build pupils' knowledge little by little, leading to secure understanding. For example, in English the curriculum helps pupils respond to texts maturely and with insight. In Spanish, pupils meet, revisit, practise and apply language structures in many contexts. In creative studies, such as textiles, art or design and technology, pupils use skills learned in one subject to help them produce high-quality pieces of work in another.

All subject leaders have identified the broad content for their subject and when pupils must learn it. Most have added the precise building blocks of knowledge needed to achieve this. They are making sure that teachers know how to deliver the content so that pupils gain the knowledge they need in the subject.

A few subjects are further behind because the subject leaders are still adding fine detail to the curriculum and developing the expertise of teachers to deliver it. In these subjects, pupils have not, in the past, learned all they need to be ready for the current, more challenging, content. In a small number of subjects the lack of detail hampers teachers in identifying and addressing these knowledge gaps. Senior leaders, governors and trustees have put in place the measures needed to ensure that these subjects improve quickly, and they are.

The school provides many opportunities to develop pupils' personal skills. Christian values contribute towards giving pupils social and moral understanding. Pupils experience activities that help shape their character as citizens of a tolerant, respectful society. For example, many participate in the national citizenship scheme or the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders put pupils' safety and their well-being at the forefront of their work. They make sure that staff are alert to signs that something is not right. The designated safeguarding lead shares information with staff and other agencies as needed to get pupils the help they need.

Leaders know their pupils, and the community they come from, well. They understand the risks that pupils may encounter out of school. They ensure that the curriculum helps build pupils' resilience to such dangers. Leaders are alert to issues in the locality such as sexual exploitation and involvement with county lines drug gangs.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are overseeing a thorough and systematic revision of the school's curriculum. This is having a notable impact on outcomes for pupils. Even so, it is not yet sufficiently coherently planned and sequenced in some subjects, including in science and mathematics. However, it is clear from the actions that leaders have already taken that they are in the process of bringing about the necessary changes by July 2021. For this reason, inspectors applied Ofsted's transition arrangement in this case.
- Some subject leaders have not focused closely enough on setting out the specific content of the curriculum. Consequently, teachers in these subjects are not well placed to ensure that pupils remember essential knowledge at every stage. All subject leaders need to ensure that teachers in their subject are given the information they need to know what pupils should learn in each lesson sequence so that pupils remember the essential content to prepare them for future learning.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144435
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10122503
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	568
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mr Will Finn
Headteacher	Mrs Paula Hearle
Website	www.ludlowschool.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ludlow Church of England School converted to become an academy on 1 April 2017. When its predecessor school, also called Ludlow Church of England School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school is part of the Diocese of Hereford Multi Academy Trust (the MAT). It is governed by the trustees of the MAT. Some governance functions are delegated to a local governing body.
- The religious character of the school was last inspected under section 48 in May 2017.
- The school uses two organisations for alternative provision for pupils: the Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service for Shropshire and the Furniture Scheme Wrekin Housing Group.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We met with the headteacher; assistant headteachers; heads of subject departments; the chief executive officer of the MAT, representatives of the local governing body; other school staff and groups of pupils.
- We carried out deep dives in: English, mathematics, Spanish, performing arts (specifically drama), history and science. A deep dive involves discussions with the subject leaders, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils.
- We met with the designated lead for safeguarding. We examined the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection.
- An inspector visited the premises of the Furniture Scheme Wrekin Housing Group.
- We looked at a range of other documents, including leaders' checks on the quality of education; minutes of trustees' meetings and those of the local governing body; and policies and records relating to attendance, behaviour and exclusions.

Inspection team

Sandy Hayes, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Ian Tustian	Her Majesty's Inspector
Dan Robinson	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Hoddinott	Ofsted Inspector

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